

Message Text

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46

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NEAE-00 IO-13 SSM-05 SAM-01

SAB-01 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04

H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 DHA-02 SCCT-01 /087 W
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O R 161437Z APR 76

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7273

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

USUN NEW YORK 310

USIA WASHDC

UNCLAS DAMASCUS 2333

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: PFOR, SY, LE

SUBJECT: APRIL 16 SYRIAN MEDIA REPORTING ON LEBANON

1. SYRIAN MEDIA DOMINATED BY REPORTING ON AGREEMENT
HAMMERED OUT BETWEEN SYRIA AND PLO LEADERSHIP EVENING
APRIL 16 (SEPTTEL). AL-BAATH BANNERED: "PRESIDENT ASAD
RECEIVES DELEGATIONS FROM PALESTINIAN RESISTANCE AND
LEBANESE POLITICIANS. REVIEW OF LATEST DEVELOPMENTS
OF SITUATION IN LEBANON. SYRIAN INITIATIVE IS BASIS FOR
EFFORTS TO END CRISIS." PRESS REPORTED ASAD DISCUSSIONS
WITH PLO DELEGATION AND WITH VARIOUS LEBANESE POLITICIANS,
INCLUDING FORMER PRIMIN YAFI, MALEK SALEM, MUHAMMAD
DUGGAN, ABDO UWAYDAT AND RIAD TAHA OF JOURNALISTS
SYNDICATE WHICH CENTERED ON EFFORTS TO SOLVE CRISIS.

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ARTICLES CONTINUED THAT CONTACTS AND CONSULTATIONS IN

BEIRUT WERE CONTINUING IN DIRECTION OF SEEKING SUCCESSOR TO FRANGIE. PRESS NOTED THAT PARLIAMENT MAY MEET IN MIDDLE OR END OF NEXT WEEK. MORE OMINOUSLY, PRESS CITED INFORMATION FROM TRAVELERS WITHIN OCCUPIED TERRITORIES THAT ISRAEL CONCENTRATING ITS FORCES ALONG NORTHERN BORDERS WITH SYRIA AND LEBANON AND WAS FORBIDDING TRAVEL TO THESE REGIONS IN ORDER TO FACILITATE TRANSPORTATION HERE OF ITS FORCES, INCLUDING ARMOR AND ARTILLERY.

2. BAATH PARTY NATIONAL COMMAND MEMBER FADIL AL-ANSARI IN FRONT-PAGE AL-BAATH EDITORIAL ASSERTED THAT SYRO-PALESTINIAN COORDINATION WAS STRONG AND THAT PALESTINIANS WERE NOT AIMING FOR "CHEAP, TEMPORARY GAINS." HE CLAIMED THAT ARABS CAPABLE ULTIMATELY OF TRANSCENDING LEBANESE CRISIS IN 1975-76 AS THEY HAD IN 1860.

3. BAATH PARTY DEPSEC GEN AHMAR TOLD VISITING YUGOSLAV DELEGATION THAT SYRIA WOULD "PREVENT IMPLEMENTATION OF AMERICAN-ZIONIST PLOT."

4. IN AL-BAATH COLUM ENTITLED, "SYRIA WILL ONLY ACT RESPONSIBLY", COLUMNIST LAUDED SYRIAN ROLE IN LEBANON AND SHARPLY CRITICIZED EGYPTIAN ROLE. HE CLAIMED THAT EGYPT AND ISRAEL MAINTAINED SIMILAR OBJECTIVES WHICH HE STATED WAS "SABOTAGE" OF SYRIAN INITIATIVE, AND WERE WORKING TOGETHER TO CREATE PRETEXT FOR ISRAELI INTERFERENCE UNDER HEADING OF "STOPPING SYRIAN INVASION."
MURPHY

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